



CathedralScript

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CATHEDRAL STORIES

I often sit in the pews at the back of the church. I look out at the backs of people's heads and wonder about the world going on in each one. When I put out the call for stories, I was hoping to find out. Your response was warm and enthusiastic. And with every story I heard or read, an extra layer was added to my picture of our community.

This started as a project for the Cathedral's 150th anniversary. But I think it's become something more than that. These seven stories are just the beginning. We'll be publishing more in the next issues of Script and my hope is that we'll never stop. These stories will touch you, surprise you, they may even inspire you to write one of your own if you haven't already. So forget everything I said about deadlines— just keep sending them in.

Elizabeth Robertson

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FOURTEEN YEARS OF WONDERFUL MEMORIES

by Sam Keuchguerian

Fourteen years ago, when my son Arek became a member of the trebles' choir at Christ Church Cathedral, he was in grade two. It was a completely new environment, and as all children his age, he was a bit shy. As for me, I already knew the church, rather, I knew the old organ with its console located on the side of the baptistery, and the pipes, near the chapel. I had played on this instrument on two separate occasions — weddings, to be specific. I don't remember the date of these events, but I do know that the grooms of both weddings have long passed away.

I remember my son's first day at Christ Church Cathedral in 1995. The choir director — at that time the director's position was held by Gerald Wheeler — checking the boy's name, asking if we were somehow related to Aram Katchatourian (composer). Arek was puzzled, and I came to the rescue even though I don't think my enigmatic "Yes and no..." answer was any good.

Before fully integrating into the new environment, my son had to adjust to the new choir director; just about a year later Patrick Wedd took

charge of the choirs at Christ Church Cathedral. Perhaps an interesting coincidence or a stroke of fate, but I was already familiar with Patrick's work from a CBC Christmas concert I had attended at the church of St-Andrew and St-Paul in 1990 when Arek was a toddler, and barely appreciative of classical or any kind of music. The church was packed, there were no available seats and I had to take turns with other family members who had volunteered in holding him and making sure he didn't bother others. Luckily, the two hours passed without incidents. I would have been happy to be able to just follow the music — someone



Sam Keuchguerian

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with a toddler usually doesn't have high expectations during concerts. But I was delighted, overjoyed and thrilled, and Patrick's presentation had a major role in the overall impression; this was one of the most satisfying performances I had ever experienced.

The Thursday evening rehearsals of the boys' choir were an ideal time for me to discover the wonderful singing of the women's choir, performing the Evensong. There I met Revd Dr. Elizabeth Rowlinson, who made a tremendous impact on me. A woman with a seemingly severe appearance, but kind at heart, she unknowingly mentored me in so many ways, while in the meantime I was familiarizing myself with the English rendition of the Psalms and Hymns.

My friendship with Al Backman is another remarkable experience. Initially, never sure of how to greet him in order to deserve a smile, I approached him once on account of something that I now don't remember. His way of treating me was suspicious; as if I had done something wrong. But then we became friends, a friendship that transcended the position he held as verger of Christ Church Cathedral. His patience and thoughtfulness towards Norman, the witty, intelligent and kind new verger, was unlimited.

Understanding the Dean, Very Revd Michael J. Pitts was another challenge; I felt a certain amount of reservation and I thought the feeling was mutual. But since then I had many opportunities of hearing him preach or talk in more intimate surroundings, and my initial worries and doubts disappeared. As for my acquaintance with Rev. Canon Joyce Sanchez, initially, I thought women in the church must necessarily be nuns — my knowledge of the Anglican churches was to say the least, very incomplete. Today I know how reformed this institution is, and how well it adjusts, adapts and responds to the needs of modern society.

Despite the initial hesitation, I feel close to Christ Church Cathedral. I owe it, at least partially, to my upbringing in a country under British dominion, but most of this feeling comes from the church itself. During the past fourteen years I came to know many of the members of the congregation, some of whom have now become trusted friends. Today I accept the church as my second home and the congregation, an extended family. ❀

*If you'd like to submit your own Cathedral Story,
please e-mail it to:
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*or mail it to:
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BEFORE WOMEN WERE SIDESMEN (AND WHAT HAPPENED NEXT)

by Vivian Lewin

In 1971 my then husband (John Geeza) and I moved from Manhattan to Montreal so he could take a one-year job at McGill. Unlike many of our contemporaries, we were churchgoers, and in New York we had found a wide variety of Christian churches. A theatre in the west 40s where communion was shared in a circle on the stage. Fordham University chapel, using liturgies fresh from the renewal that followed Vatican II. The Hungarian Catholic church in our neighbourhood. So when we came to the new city, without benefit of the internet, we started our search for a parish at the Diocesan Book Room on Union Street where we eyeballed the wonderful selection of books, noted lots of writers we knew (Thomas Merton, Charles Williams and CS Lewis) and sidled up to the youngest, longest-haired clerk and asked "where can we find a good mass?" He suggested we try the 10 a.m. at the Cathedral, and while skeptical... we had been thinking more along the lines of Loyola chapel, I guess...we were blown away by music the likes of which we had only heard on recordings, the warmth of the community, the accessibility of the liturgy (it was an experimental form called "Kootenay"). We came back, not every Sunday but with some regularity. After two years, John was asked to sit on Select Vestry, and I was invited to join the ladies who washed and ironed the holy linen.

In those days, the sidesmen were indeed men, the young people in the choir were boys, and the servers were all male churchgoers of different ages. We were told about the "old days" when the sidesmen wore morning coats and striped trousers, when the pews were rented by various families, and how modern things now were. (In fact, the parish had eliminated "Anglican Church Women" in favour of including women in other parish activities such as Select Vestry. The Chancel Guild however did not include men!) A few months after the "Support Group for Women in Priesthood" was created...and long before any women were actually ordained... Frances Sheppard and I were invited to become the first two women "greeters." We took this very seriously. Unlike Archie Malloch, who to the dismay of some presided at the drafty West Door all winter in a thick and fuzzy cardigan, I'd wear a wool dress or tailored suit and fold up my ski underwear beneath, under my nylons. And while I quickly figured out what to wear, it took longer to get used to "doing something" during the liturgy. When were we supposed to pray? How were we to maintain some reverence without being stuffy or pretentious? After a while I

relaxed. To be a good host at a church service *is* reverent! It's simply a different form of devotion than personal prayer. Helping people find a place, giving them their books, eyeballing the communion line so those heading for the high altar were neither obliged to wait too long, nor hurry forward, keeping my eyes in the direction of the collection plate as I passed it, but not staring, either, at who put what into it... I took pleasure in these small accomplishments and I loved seeing the postures of people as they moved into the church and through the service. Sometimes it seemed and still seems to me that in worship, individuals quite naturally carry many of their past selves with them and an observer can spot these in the carriage of a head or an arm, the spring of a step. To be a greeter is to welcome all these moments and more.

Was it two or three years later that the then Dean asked whether I would care to join a group of women in sewing albs for the servers? Up until then, they had worn cassocks. My mind jumped to what I thought was a logical deduction and my eyes lit up: "Does this mean we are going to have women servers?" The response was sharp. "George Deare [Head Server] is a faithful servant of this Cathedral and I will not have him badgered with talk of this kind!" I walked home over the mountain, working off the heat of that exchange. In due course, and not too long later, one or two women servers did appear. Elsa Cohen was one of the first. Letty James was ordained priest in the Cathedral, in the presence of television cameras and formal protest from some clergy. Our parish was asked to appoint a newly ordained woman priest, Donna Wilson, and I grew in understanding as I heard an older and rather conservative woman behind me turn to her husband at the Vestry meeting and say softly, "If the Bishop asks us to, I guess it's all right." ❀



Vivian Lewin, center, with Rev. Canon Joyce Sanchez (left)

MY STORY

by MarKo Hubert

I do remember when I first set foot at the cathedral. It was in the 2001 spring a couple of weeks before Easter. Maybe it would be good to tell you about my mental health at that time. I'm a gay guy. Born in a Roman Catholic family in the Abitibi-Temiscaming region. Being gay in that region and in my family is simply evil. They have rejected me and it was forbidden for me to be alone with my nephews. For them being gay means also being pedophile. No words could be harsh enough to describe their disgust about me. Let's say that whore was the less offensive word used by my own mother when she first suspected my sexual orientation at 14 years old after I spilled the beans about being abused by one of my brothers for 7 years. When I did my coming out, I was sent at 24 year old to Medjugorie in the former Yugoslavia, a very popular pilgrim place at that time, to beg the Virgin Mary to be healed that I might be acceptable and worthy to her son, our Lord Jesus Christ (meaning be worthy to her and my family). I can also speak about all the mistreatment I passed through at school by the teachers, how I as a dyslexic I had been declared by those people to be too stupid to be able to do something good in my life. Let's say that I'd had been taught to never believe in myself and not to have self-respect.

Now, back to the first time ever I came to this cathedral. I was crying my eyes out in the front pew in the right hand of the center. Suddenly, I saw this little bearded priest coming toward me. I was scared of being thrown out from the church so I fled by myself. A couple of weeks after, I came back in the very same pew and again the same little bearded man came in but this time he asked me to be still and have a chat. I have to admit that I was very surprised. I thought that Father Pitts must have lost his marbles! So he took the time to ask me what had happened to me and why I was crying like that. With the little of English I had at that time I tried to explain myself. We switched to French. What a surprise for me to speak in my mother tongue with an anglo... hou hou!!!! So after I'd explained to him my situation - a long abusive relationship, and another one which had just finished dramatically and all of my past, I was confirmed in my belief about him... he had really lost his marbles! Instead of sending me away from him and his church, as I was used in the Roman Catholic faith, he was respectful and spoke to me as a human being. He also invited me to meet him at his office if I needed to. He assured me that I wasn't a waste of space

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A REVIEW OF ATOM EGOYAN'S FILM

ADORATION

By Bill Converse

Atom Egoyan (b. 1960) is a well known independent Canadian film director, producer and screenwriter whose films include *Ararat* (2002) and *The Sweet Hereafter* (1992). Egoyan shuns conventional Hollywood formulas, employing instead the language of film to explore his own artistic vision and idiosyncratic ideas by means of his characters and their unique situations. Egoyan developed an early appreciation of the work of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter and this helps to understand his cinematography. Egoyan presents puzzles, but at the same time provides logical clues for solving them. He engages viewers in the process of discovery. His films are demanding and may require more than one viewing. All this can be off-putting, even for Egoyan aficionados.

Adoration is vintage Egoyan, with its convoluted storyline, its complex and sometimes bizarre characters, its blurring of different personal, cultural and ethnic identities. At times the film stops just short of transgressing boundaries. It is a very beautiful film, with its autumn and winter landscapes. *Adoration* is laden with symbolism: the violin scroll, the Christmas ornaments, the beaded Muslim veil and, of course, the Nativity tableau. Music is also integral to Egoyan's cinematography. Michael Danna's soundtrack envelops the action.

Adoration is about the construction of identity and the deconstruction of reality. Space and time are relativized. *Adoration* recalls Egoyan's earlier films *Family Viewing* (1987) and *Speaking Parts* (1989). Another important theme is how modern communications technologies disembodify people and isolate them, thereby distorting reality and releasing demonic forces in society, leading to the struggle "against the cosmic powers of this present darkness." The film is vaguely sinister with its themes of terrorism and the ever present threat of physical violence. This finally erupts in a bizarre dispute in a restaurant over a sandwich already consumed.

The plot revolves around seventeen year old Simon (Devon Bostick), an orphaned teenager whose parents Rachel (Rachel Blanchard) and Sami (Noam Jenkins) died in a car crash when he was only nine years old. The car crash may or may not have been an accident (there is more than one version of what happened). Simon's grandfather Morris (Kenneth Welsh) is convinced that his son-in-law deliberately crashed the car to kill Rachel in order to spite him. The accident followed yet another bitter family argument over dinner. Simon's parents' marriage was intercultural (his father was Lebanese). Morris refused to accept Sami because of his origins.

This background is provided by flash backs. Simon interviews his grandfather in hospital where he is dying of cancer and records these conversations by means his video cell phone.

Simon is being brought up by his uncle, Rachel's brother Tom (Scott Speedman), who has assumed responsibility for his nephew following the fatal crash. Tom is clearly challenged. His anger and aggression are very evident from his behavior and his body language. He is determined, however, that Simon shall stay in the same house and neighborhood that his parents had lived in before the fatal accident. Financially this is proving to be difficult. While Rachel and Sami had made adequate provision for Simon, the money is held in trust until Simon reaches twenty-five. Tom, therefore, finds himself in a serious financial bind. It is not easy to maintain Simon's parents' lifestyle on the income of a tow truck driver. The only disposable asset is the violin that belonged to Simon's mother who was an accomplished musician. Simon is reluctant to part with it. The saga of the violin provides the subplot.

Simon attends a private school in Toronto. As part of a French class, he translates a story about an intercultural relationship gone sour. A Jordanian booked his pregnant Irish girl friend on an El-Al flight from London to Tel Aviv with plastic explosives concealed in her hand luggage. This was a terrorist plot to blow up the plane with all its passengers and simultaneously to get rid of the woman and the unwanted fetus. Israeli security agents foil the plot when they discover the hidden explosives. The intense interrogation of the naïve and unsuspecting young woman about to board the flight to Israel is one of the most dramatic sequences in the film.

Simon becomes thoroughly engrossed in this narrative which is based on a real incident that occurred in 1986. He imagines himself to be the fetus carried by the young woman. His teacher Sabine (Arisinée Khanjian) who also happens to be Lebanese (it is later revealed that she was Sami's first wife) questions Simon about his intense interest in the story. She invites him to join her drama class and to write a scenario. He presents it to the class as his own personal history. The class accepts the fiction as a true story. The teacher decides to present it as a school play. The principal refuses on the grounds that the subject-matter is too sensitive. In the meantime, the story moves from the classroom to a chat room on the Internet via Webcam. The images of the talking heads shown on the screen of Simon's laptop heatedly arguing the pros and cons of the ethics of fiction being presented as fact have an almost voyeuristic quality: an elderly Holocaust survivor shows her concentration camp number tattooed on her forearm; a skinhead displays his Holocaust denial tattooed on his upper arm. There is some-

thing almost surreal about this exhibitionism.

The film moves back and forth between truth and fiction, between reality and virtual reality. *Egoyanesque* is the sequence in which Sabine (with Simon's connivance) turns up unexpectedly and uninvited at the house, her face covered with a beaded Islamic veil. She explains to an unsuspecting but wary Tom that she was driving through the neighborhood when she spotted the Nativity scene on the lawn. This carefully constructed tableau, with its life-size wooden figures, was the creation of Simon's deceased grandmother (Morris' wife). It is set up each December. Sabine says she wants to congratulate the owner for his tangible expression of his religious faith in a secular society. She further nonpluses Tom by assuring him that Muslims also consider Jesus to be a prophet and hold the Jews responsible for his death! While Egoyan is careful not to attach the terms "Jew," "Christian," and "Muslim" to specific characters, a certain ambiguity remains. However, Egoyan avoids stereotyping.

Confusing fiction with reality often leads to serious consequences. Sabine is fired from her job at Simon's school. In an initial interview with a woman lawyer, she is told that she does not have case. Sabine knowingly contrived the situation and manipulated a student who was clearly very vulnerable. The fact that Simon was not enrolled in the drama course makes her case implausible.

The film concludes at the family's summer home at North Bay, Ontario, when Simon piles the life size figures from the Nativity tableau on the pier, places the video cell phone on top, douses the pyre with gasoline and sets it alight. The final shots show the video cell phone crumpling in the intense heat, its images distorted by the flames, a veritable bonfire of vanities.

Adoration is directed by Egoyan and produced by Robert Lantos, Jennifer Weiss and Simone Urdl. The film was first shown at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2008 where it won the prize of the Ecumenical Jury. It was nominated for the Palme d'Or. *Adoration* was released in Montréal at the beginning of May. Duration: 101 minutes. This is Atom Egoyan's eleventh feature length film and, in the opinion of this writer, his finest yet. It is a must for all devotees of Atom Egoyan. It is especially recommended for those who have not previously been exposed to the work of this brilliant Canadian cinematographer. ❀

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GLUTEN FREE HOSTS?

by Janet King

"The bread of life" is poison for people with the disease (celiac) with which I and several other members of this congregation live. That is a genetic autoimmune disorder that results in damage to the tiny finger-like protrusions, called villi, that line the small intestine, when gluten in wheat, barley, rye is ingested in any minuscule amounts. When I was first diagnosed a dietician told me: "This is what you can never eat again: bread, pies, pasta, pizza..."

Unpleasant symptoms, not dinner-table conversation, include diarrhoea, constipation, vomiting, bloating, cramps, and it can lead to malnutrition, weight loss, anemia, depression, infertility, etc. So, we choose to be safe and not invite symptoms.

Therefore, we are not inclined to eat even a wheat-containing wafer, and we have theological explanations for not doing so. At the height of the bird flu epidemic several years ago, the Diocese of Montreal issued the following statement: "Communion in only one kind (the bread) is the best option for those fearful of the cup, both from the standpoint of preventing the spread of infection and from a theological perspective". In the same communique, it was said that for the average communicant, and for the priests involved, "it would seem that the risk of drinking from the common cup is probably less than the risk of air-borne infection in using a common building." The theological advice is that the full benefit of the sacrament is present in both species, the doctrine of Concomitance, which is available in the case of the communion of the dying or of infants. So, either one, bread or wine, is sufficient sacramentally. Communicants unable or unwilling to receive both may so indicate by not extending their hands or by leaving after the bread, and/or may instead receive a blessing from the priest.

Intinction, or dipping the bread (host) into the wine, is in practice discouraged, although it still happens, because fingers could spread infections in spite of the wine's alcoholic content. You may have noticed hand sanitizers at the back of the church, which may be used after passing the peace, and in the chancel, which the priests may use before administering communion, although Anglican priests for centuries have not reported any episode of disease attributable to the common cup.

In the Diocese of Salisbury (U.K.) and probably many others, there is an edict and explanation in the bulletin that only the bread (host) will be given, while the blessed wine is exclusively for the celebrant, to avoid the spread of influenza; so I, in Salisbury and at Purton,

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or a disgusting, dirty, scummy being who should make himself disappear from the surface of the earth as I thought I was. I was so surprised that it was possible to be accepted in a church. I had been also very puzzled to be informed that a well known and accepted gay man worked there as the choir director and that his partner is also member of the community and the choir. Now I did not just believe that Father Pitt had lost his marbles but all the congregation must have lost their marbles too! It was like the entire world was going upside down. It was unbelievable for a man like me, but how refreshing! So after two or three meetings with the Dean I'd asked if a guy like me could be member of this parish. Then he told me about the reception which would occur a week later at Easter. So I took my decision right away and became an Anglican that very week. It was also the occasion to meet the scariest women I'd never met at that time. Mother Sanchez came in with the papers to sign. My God this huge, motherly women, at that time, made me very uncomfortable, and I felt trapped like a mouse in the Father Pitts' office with her blocking the way out. Gosh! It was also the first time I realized that women could be priests in this faith and as an ex roman-catholic guy I really had no idea how to deal with that. Anyway, I was received that Easter as member of this



MarKo Hubert

church. People have been very friendly to me, trying to speak in French to me and making me comfortable with them. But, because I was still afraid to be rejected by the church's members, I've been in and out of the church for mostly 6 years since my reception. But each time people let me know that they were happy to see me back.

Now, I'm a member of the choir for a bit. I'm often at church. I have had the chance to make contact with Joyce and I have discovered this wonderful woman with her beliefs and her doubts. She has shared her difficult times, her happiest moments and those less happy. Joyce, like Father Pitts, has never tried to make me believe that she is perfect. This was also a big surprise for me. I was used to dealing with "perfect" Roman Catholic priests with whom it was impossible to be myself. Even Bishop Clarke is this simple man full of love for human beings... sometimes it's still very strange to me.

So that's my story. Christ Church Cathedral is now my church, where I can be myself, and grow in my belief. ❀

A STORY FROM LONDON, ONTARIO

by Catherine Nightingale-Taylor

My name is Catherine, I am 23-years old, and a parishioner at Saint James Westminster Anglican Church in London, Ontario. Although no one here knows who I am I have a personal story about Christ Church Cathedral that I would like to share. A story that even now nearly a year after the event the emotions of this experience still resound within me. For me this is a powerful story of realization and freedom, a story I have seldom told. Only recently, while enrolled in a Lay Certificate class through Huron University College, was I compelled to tell this story verbally for the first time. So here I am now, nearly twelve months have passed since my time at the Cathedral my story has been recorded and now I am ready to share it with you, the people of Christ Church Cathedral.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen

In mid-June 2008 I happened upon Christ Church Cathedral while visiting Montreal with a friend. We found this remarkable place quite unintentionally; as we had planned to spend the day shopping along Rue Sainte-Catherine. I was immediately taken by the building's striking beauty and remarkable history, and when I learned there would be a noon-hour Eucharist I chose to participate in the service while my friend moved on towards the shops along the street.

During my visit to Montreal the time I spent within Christ Church has been something that has resounded within me even to this day; representing a major milestone for me. Having the ability to walk through the doors alone into a completely unfamiliar Church, participate in a worship service and not feel afraid. All things I had not had been able to do in the past; having suffered for years from abusive relationships and situations I was led to not only fear God and all associated with the Church but completely abandon the Church and God Himself. For the first time I found myself at ease in a completely unfamiliar Church.

It was that day in June within the Cathedral spending thirty minutes in quiet worship and prayer where I began to realize how much healing and spiritual growth had taken place within my life. Those thirty minutes helped free me from a numbing fear that had taken root in me years before. I have always felt a great fondness for the city of Montreal and have enjoyed visiting it over the years, however the city now holds a completely different meaning for me - spiritual freedom and liberty, the discovery of just how far the healing powers of God's hand can reach.

I may never be able to fully explain the feelings and emotions sparked by my visit to the cathedral. A seemingly random act with profound repercussions, not a mere passing feeling to be forgotten a few days later. The event was a huge stepping stone for me, something I have held onto that I trust has marked me for the rest of my life. Far from home, I suddenly felt at home. I walked into the church unsure of why I was being drawn inside; I walked out astounded by what had taken place within me.

That evening as I sat in my hotel room I spoke with God about the remarkable experience earlier in the day. This is a part of that conversation:

"I find it interesting that of all the places I have visited in this city, what I cherish most are the churches. The opportunity to sit in their cool quiet interiors and know that in all of them you are celebrated, and that you are there. So it was as well in the massive, cool, quiet and peaceful Cathedral. Walking in I noticed a sign announcing a Holy Eucharist would take place at noon. I didn't have to think about my decision to attend. It just seemed natural. No anxiety. A knowing that it was what I needed.

Attending the service, having the ability to walk through the church doors without anxiety over what would be awaiting me. Knowing the liturgy and responses by heart, even though spoken in a language not my own. The ability to sit in the chapel calmly and peacefully. Each of these things showed me, the fear that once prevailed over me, the fear of church, clergy and you, God, had subsided. Replaced by something new, calming and peaceful.

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CATHEDRAL ASSISTANT ORGANIST DONALD HUNT GOES TO TRURO

by Beth Adams



Donald Hunt

In early September, Donald Hunt left for Truro Cathedral in Cornwall, England, where he'll have a one-year position. "I've been at Christ Church Cathedral for about five years now - three as organ scholar, and two as assistant organist," Donald said. "As organ scholar, you're basically pulling stops and turning pages for

the other organists, and doing a lot of watching. Gradually, as you feel ready, you take on more responsibility. Patrick is very hands-off about that - how much you do is up to you, really - but he makes you want to do more. Basically, everybody wants to play all the time, so we work it out among ourselves. You start playing maybe one hymn at the 10:00 service, then work up to doing more and more. Patrick is enormously encouraging and helpful; I owe so much of my playing and musical development to him."

Donald didn't intend to go into a liturgical music career; he'd planned to be a concert organist but changed his mind. Patrick is quick to point out that Donald is one of the best young organists he's ever worked with. "He won the Quebec competition, and deservedly so," Patrick said. "He played astoundingly well - including the Messaien piece, which he played better than anyone I've heard perform it - including myself! All the judges just looked at each other, speechless."

Donald gives credit to the demanding cathedral experience for improving his performance skills and composure: "My nerves have gotten so much better from doing this job!" He also acknowledges a "soft spot" for the English romantics, like Stanford and Howells, and says he hopes to use this year to immerse himself in the English church repertoire. Truro Cathedral has a choir school and a choir of men and boys who sing five or six services each week. Donald will have some duties connected to the school, as well as performing more of the "organ scholar" jobs; he says he won't have as much opportunity to play, or the same open access to

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Following the service I was able to meet the celebrant, Reverend Clarke. Calmly, I was able to speak to him, confidently I shook his hand and was able to look him in the eyes. I was not afraid, as I have often been in the past when speaking with clergy. I was calm, peaceful, and completely at home in the church of my chosen faith.

I believe, God, that you led me into that church today to show me how far I have grown. To show me that the fear that once consumed me has been replaced with a deep and peaceful calm that reaches the deepest part of my soul.

As I close this prayer to you, a few lines from a Latin prayer that has pulled me through so much, in so many ways, echos softly inside my head ...

Gloria in Excelsis Deo - Glory to God in the Highest. Amen”

This story represents a major turning point in my spiritual life. I have carried this remarkable experience with me ever since returning home from Montreal, and it has most definitely affected how I interact within my own Parish here in London. Shortly before leaving for Montreal I was approached by a member of our Readers’ Guild and asked to join; I told them I would think about it and let them know, hesitant at the time to commit I left for Montreal. My time in Christ Church Cathedral showed me that God heals all wounds, and that whatever was done to me in the past no longer affects the way I see God or the Church.

Had I not chosen to go to the Cathedral would I be where I am now? Who knows... perhaps God would have shown me another way, another Church. God directed me to the Cathedral for a reason. I now think of this magnificent place as my church home away from home, and I look forward to returning to it some day.

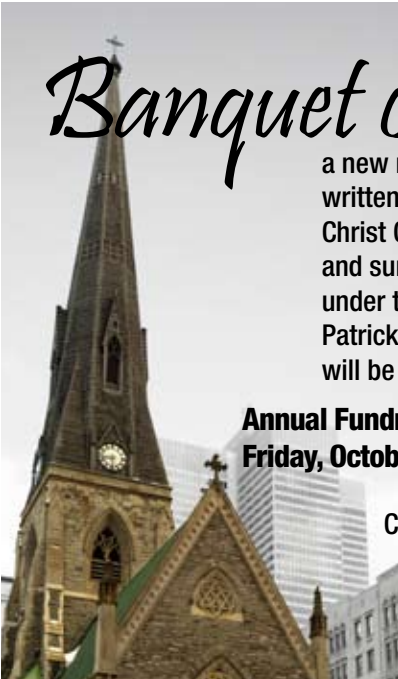
And yes, when I returned to London I accepted the offer to become a member of our Readers’ Guild.

May you be blessed in all that you do, living each day as it comes; always listening for God’s gentle knock at your heart. You never know where He will lead you and what remarkable journey you will be put on unless you listen... ❀

Donald Hunt*continued from page 7*

the organ, but sees this year as a remarkable chance to learn more.

Donald Hunt’s own setting of the evening canticles will be on the new choir CD which will be released this fall, and we hope he’ll continue to compose as well as play and conduct. He expressed particular thanks to Patrick and to the cathedral choir for being so accepting and appreciative of people learning on the job. All of us at Christ Church Cathedral want to thank Donald for his time among us and the beauty of his playing. We wish him well in the next phase of his career - which we hope will include frequent visits back to us here! ❀



Banquet céleste
a new recording of music
written for
Christ Church Cathedral
and sung by its Choirs
under the direction of
Patrick Wedd
will be launched at the

**Annual Fundraising Concert
Friday, October 23, at 7:30 pm**

Come and experience
fresh and exciting
music for the
Church

Gluten-free Hosts?*continued from page 5*

crossed my hands and received “merely” a blessing at the altar rail.

The chalice and linens are washed after each liturgy with soap and water. A thirty-second hand wash will eliminate 95% of all bacteria. “It must be stressed that the present use of the common cup is normal for Anglican churches, follows the practice of the universal church from the beginning until well into the middle ages, and poses no real hazard to health in normal circumstances. If you have the flu or a cold or a cold sore, don’t drink from the cup nor dip the wafer into it. Receive your communion in the form of the bread alone”.

Should our church acquire gluten-free hosts, made of rice flour instead of wheat flour?

Probably not, because a) they are made infrequently, so stale quickly and taste bad (that should not matter but does count), b) not many of us want or need them, and c) they are unnecessary from a theological perspective. ❀